

Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07

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USNMR SHAPE

CINCEUR

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, MNUC, NATO, US, TU

SUBJECT: TURKISH PRESS COMMENT ON NATO NUCLEAR STRATEGY

REF: ANKARA 8885

1. RESPECTED CORRESPONDENT OF LIBERAL DAILY 'MILLIYET',
MEHMET ALI BIRAND, COMMENTED ON NATO NUCLEAR STRATEGY,
U.S. NUCLEAR ARMS POLICY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TURKEY
IN LENGTHY ARTICLE PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 29. WRITING FROM
BRUSSELS, BIRAND STATED THAT THE U.S. IS ATTEMPTING
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TO REDUCE NATO TACTICAL NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS, INCLUDING

THOSE IN TURKEY, AND TO SHIFT EMPHASIS TO CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS. BIRAND SAID THERE ARE 7000 NUCLEAR WARHEADS IN EUROPE (INCLUDING TURKEY) AND THAT DISCUSSIONS GOING ON IN NATO NOW WILL PROBABLY LEAD TO DISMANTLEMENT OF SOME TACTICAL NUCLEAR INTALLATIONS. HE ADDED: "IT IS BELIEVED THAT U.S. SENATOR NUNN'S INITIATIVES AND THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S APPROACHES WILL NOT SLOW DOWN THESE EFFORTS." (NOTE: THIS IS FIRST LOCAL PRESS COMMENT ON NUNN/BARTLETT REPORT; SEE REFTEL.)

2. ON NUCLEAR BALANCE WITH SOVIETS, BIRAND SAID: "WASHINGTON HAS BEEN FREQUENTLY FORCED TO REVISE ITS NUCLEAR ARMS ARRANGEMENTS BECAUSE, SINCE NATO'S FOUNDING, THE SOVIET UNION HAS STRUCK THE BALANCE IN NUCLEAR ARMS AND HAS EVEN SURPASSED THE USA IN SOME FIELDS." NOTING U.S. DESIRE TO AVOID "UNNECESSARY THREAT OR EXCESSIVE EXPENDITURE", BIRAND THEN QUOTED UNNAMED NATO OFFICIAL AS FOLLOWS: "WE KEEP WARHEADS IN STOCK FOR OUTDATED SYSTEMS AND THUS WE BOTH INCREASE THE FIRST ATTACK TARGETS OF THE SOVIETS AND SPEND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS ON THEIR MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION." SAME NATO OFFICIAL ALLEGEDLY SAID THAT SOME NATO ALLIES SUSPECT THAT THE U.S. WANTS TO REDUCE NUCLEAR STOCKPILES IN EUROPE IN ORDER TO DECREASE THE THREAT OF DIRECT SOVIET RETALIATION AGAINST THE U.S.

3. REGARDING TURKEY'S INTEREST IN NATO NUCLEAR STRATEGY, BIRAND SAID THAT GOT HAS STOOD ON SIDELINES MERELY OBSERVING CHANGES IN NATO'S NUCLEAR DEPLOYMENT. TURKISH POLICY, HE SAID, WAS SET IN 1971 WHEN THE GOT DECLARED THAT THE PRESENT NUMBER OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON TURKISH SOIL WAS SUFFICIENT AND THERE WAS NO NEED FOR INCREASE OR REDUCTION. BIRAND THEN ASSERTED THAT THE SOVIET NUCLEAR THREAT TO TURKEY IS CREATED BY THE PRESENCE OF U.S. NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON TURKISH SOIL, AND HE CRITICIZED GOT FOR NOT PARTICIPATING IN NATO DISCUSSIONS ON NUCLEAR STRATEGY AND DEPLOYMENT. (COMMENT: THOUGH NOT EXPLICIT, THIS COULD BE BACKHANDED REFERENCE TO FACT THAT TURKEY CURRENTLY IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE NPG.)
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